

American Sign Language 100 (ASL I) Syllabus
Palomar College

Instructor: Melissa Smith
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Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays
Escondido campus: 12:05-12:35
San Marcos: 4-5 and 7:30-8:30 pm

Required texts* and materials:

1. *Learning American Sign Language* by Humphries and Padden. Note: Although there is a video to accompany the text that you may choose to watch in the library (on reserve) or in the ASL lab, you are not required to purchase it for this class. You can view vocabulary for this book and the dialogues with a TV icon on the DVD.
2. *Signing Naturally, Level 1* student workbook and video by Smith, Mikos and Lentz.

*Both of these books are also to be used in ASL 2.

3. Bring or borrow a camera to record yourself signing a 3-minute final signed project.

Recommended materials:

Many students find it helpful to make flash cards using vocabulary in your textbooks.

Course description and objectives: This course is an introduction to American Sign Language, the language used by Deaf people in the U.S. and most of Canada. Students will develop practical skills and knowledge for successful interactions within the deaf community. Since a language cannot be separated from its culture, you will learn some information on Deaf culture (including attention getting strategies, politically correct terminology, and behavioral norms/values). You will also learn beginning ASL vocabulary and grammar (including use of space, non-manual markers, and classifiers).

Student learning outcomes (<http://www.palomar.edu/learningoutcomes/Default.aspx>)

1. Students will be able to describe their immediate family units including parents, years married, enumeration of siblings in pecking order, names and ages.
2. The student will be able to express basic conversational information, (introductions, discuss family, etc.) at a beginning sign language level.

Attendance and participation: Make-ups will not be allowed unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. If you miss a class, **you are responsible for checking with a classmate** to learn what you missed and what will be due at the following class meeting. After 4 absences, your grade will be lowered one full level. After the 5th absence you will either be dropped from the course or you will receive a failing grade. **You are responsible for officially withdrawing from or dropping the class.** College deadlines are posted at <http://www.palomar.edu/admissions/Calendars.htm>.

Grades will be based on the following:

Homework (75 points)

- Signing Naturally workbook assignments 8 x 3 points each = 24 points
 - Deaf community experience papers 2 x 15 points each = 30 points
- ASL Lab time (2 points per hour/max 15 hours) 15 hours = 30 points

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Quizzes (TBA every week or two)		= 200 points
Midterm project (videotaped)	1 x 35 points	= 35 points
Final project	1 x 70 points	= 70 points
Midterm exam	1 x 100 points	= 100 points
Final exam	1 x 100 points	= 100 points

Grading scale:

Total possible = 589 points

A = 90-100%

B = 80-89%

C = 70-79%

D = 60-69%

F = less than 60%

ASL/Interpreting Lab – http://www.palomar.edu/speech_and_asl/asllab/default.htm

Students are expected to complete 15 hours of study in the ASL/Interpreting Lab in room N-4 on the San Marcos campus. You may study with a partner, work on vocabulary, get help from a Lab Technician, watch ASL videos, practice fingerspelling, or just have conversations using sign language. Leave your voices at the door—no talking is allowed in the lab.

Projects: Midterm and final projects will be videotaped presentations of each student signing in front of the class. Projects should be well-prepared, rehearsed, and nearly memorized.

Homework: You will periodically be given expressive signing assignments. Videos for both required textbooks are available for your use on reserve in the library and in the American Sign Language/Interpreting Lab in room N-4 on the San Marcos campus.

1. To promote a successful signing only environment, you are required to review vocabulary and preview by reading carefully through the entire unit/s to be covered in both books **before coming to class each day**.
2. Workbook exercises from *Signing Naturally* will also be assigned. You should expect to rewind **several times**. Do not try to translate each sentence in the video, *only answer the questions asked* in the workbook. The correct answers are in the back of the book. After completing the workbook exercises, check your work and show your corrections. Look at the DVD again to see if you can catch what went wrong. For each section completed, you will write a brief paragraph describing which answers you got wrong and why. Be specific about the parts of each section you aren't getting and what is going well. If you didn't get any wrong in a section, write a brief paragraph that describes the strategies you used to succeed.

Research/cultural immersion papers: You must attend two different deaf community events (at least one event must be medium to large and have at least 50 Deaf or hard of hearing people in attendance) and write a two page, double-spaced paper about each experience. Observe and analyze interactions and cultural phenomena among deaf people as they compare to your own experiences in similar settings. Raise thoughtful questions and insightful observations in your paper. All events must be approved by the instructor.

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I understand that it may be difficult to get down to San Diego. I have chosen certain events because I predict they will be well attended by members of the Deaf community. *Please plan ahead to carpool with your classmates and **attend two of these events** (or others that I announce) **during the semester**.* Discuss any potential schedule conflicts with me within the first three weeks of the semester.

Approved events

Please plan to attend at least one of the following two medium to large-scale events:

1. Deaf Awareness Day http://www.dadsandiego.org/DAD_ticket.html

2144 Pan American Rd W, San Diego, CA ([map](#))

A semi-large annual fundraiser in San Diego sponsored by Deaf Community Services. The event showcases services and products geared toward the Deaf community. Interpreters are provided and all are welcome!!

Deaf Community Services (DCS) is located at 3930 Fourth Ave., Suite 300, in the Hillcrest area of San Diego (www.dcsosfd.org). Check calendar for other events.

Any performances through Deaf West Theatre in Hollywood (Interpreters provided if specified) <http://www.deafwest.org/productions/nowplaying.html>

2. DEAFestival Los Angeles FREE!

6350 Woodley Ave, Van Nuys, CA 91406 ([map](#))

For more information, visit: <http://www.gladinc.org/events/deafestival-los-angeles>

4. Silent Weekend (beginning ASL students only) – counts for two events. This ASL immersion weekend is held near Bakersfield (Tehachapi). <http://www.deafkidskamp.com/>

Ongoing events open to ASL students

Although I prefer the previous events, your second event may be selected from the following list or others that I announce during the semester if your conversational skills are adequate. Other events must be approved in advance.

Approved 2nd Events – *Please do not attend these events until you can participate in a conversation using sign language.*

The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf – Meets in Mission Valley every Friday from ~8:30 to 11:30 pm. It is located at 925 Camino De La Reina, San Diego, CA 92108

The Block At Orange – meets on the 2nd Friday of each month from 7pm – closing. It is located at 20 City Blvd. West, Orange, CA, 92868, just off the 5 Freeway at the City Drive Exit in the city of Orange. Usually more than a hundred people are in attendance.

Course methodology: Students will learn through a variety of in-class collaborative activities, discussions, lectures, videotapes, homework, and out-of-class practice. Learning a new language requires using that language, so ***there will be NO SPOKEN ENGLISH USED IN CLASS!*** You

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may mime or gesture your questions to me, come see me during office hours, or e-mail me. If you need a review of certain signs, come to class early and write the words on the board.

Expectations for participation:

Just as you would for any college class, you are expected to take notes during class!!

To succeed in this class, you must take responsibility for your learning. For example:

- If you are not following what is going on in class, raise your hand to ask for clarification. I cannot read your mind, so you **MUST** tell me if you are lost before I get too far ahead. Unlike other classes, you often can't find the answer in a book later. My signed conversations with other students are a great learning tool for all of you. Be sure to watch how I respond when someone doesn't understand me.
- Since there will be no English used in class, it is imperative that you do your homework and **check with a classmate** if you have to miss a class. If you allow yourself to fall behind, it will be very difficult to catch up.
- Practice and memorize signs at home as soon as you can after class is over. If you don't remember how to produce a sign, come to class early enough to write it on the board. I will review any signs written on the board at the beginning of class.

Online resources:

ASL dictionaries:

<http://www.aslpro.com/> and <http://commtechlab.msu.edu/Sites/aslweb/browser.htm>

Fingerspelling practice: <http://asl.ms/>

Online books, animated videos, and games that are accessible in sign language:

<http://www.cc.gatech.edu/program/cats/>

Special needs: Students with disabilities who may need academic accommodations should discuss options with the instructor during the first two weeks of class.

Final Exams: Holidays, important deadlines, and the final exam schedule can be accessed at <http://www.palomar.edu/admissions/Calendars.htm>.

Homework assignments:

Your first assignment will be due next week. If you have not purchased your books, plan to do homework in the ASL/Interpreting Lab. Hours of operation and location information are online at http://www.palomar.edu/speech_and_asl/asllab/default.htm.

The first homework assignment is due this Thursday (week 1):

1. Read "To the Student" in *Learning American Sign Language* (LASL) and "Strategies for Learning American Sign Language" in *Signing Naturally* (SN). **Write a summary of key points.**
2. Go to my Web page (<http://daphne.palomar.edu/mbsmith>) and print the ASL 100 syllabus. Write your first and last name clearly at the top. These will be collected and used to take roll on Thursday.

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Homework for Thursday of week 2:

1. Review vocabulary in Unit 1 of LASL and read all of the Grammar and Culture Notes.* Practice the dialogues and exercises (with a partner if possible). Review vocabulary in Unit 1 of SN and read all of the Culture and Language Notes.* **Write any questions regarding vocabulary or the notes from these units on your homework.**
2. Do Unit 1 in your SN workbook
 - a. Read through pp. 1-2 of your SN workbook, then view the Unit 1 lesson on the SN DVD without stopping.
 - b. Read each conversation in your workbook again and then watch the corresponding conversation on your DVD. You are only looking for the bolded phrases. **Write a sentence that tells me whether or not you can pick out the identified “Key phrases.”**
 - c. Re-read the instructions for the grammar practice on page 2. The instructions do not ask you what each sign or sentence means. You only have to identify whether each person signs the same sentence or shape, not what it means. This helps you to develop your visual attention skills. HINT: Remember to watch the signer’s face, not just his or her hands. You do not have to do the “Sequences of Shapes” part of this exercise.
 - d. **Using a different colored pen, check and correct your answers** (which are printed in the back of the book).
 - e. Look at the DVD again to figure out why you marked each incorrect answer. On your homework paper, **write a description of what went wrong.**
3. Turn in your neatly written or typed homework.

With your SN workbook homework, I am especially interested in your description of what you see now but overlooked the first time around.

It may help to pause the DVD between signers so you have time to write answers in the workbook. You may re-play as often as you wish. Slowing the DVD down will not help you improve your visual acuity. The process described above (Steps 2-4) should be followed for all assigned units.

Contact information:

Be sure Palomar College has your valid email information. If I cancel class for any reason, I try to notify you by email as soon as possible.

Diversity statement:

Palomar College is committed to promoting respect for and sensitivity toward all of our students and staff. We take pride in our sexual, gender, religious, ethnic, and racial diversity. In this class and in the Deaf community, please be respectful.